

Dublin Grand Opera Society
Winter 1964



Wiesbaden State Theatre
Gaiety Theatre Dublin

Reproduction on the Cover is the Theatre of Hesse in Wiesbaden. The seating accommodation in this Opera House is 1,300. The population of Wiesbaden is 258,000.

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History of the Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden

There is little information on the beginning of the theatrical life of Wiesbaden. Documents on Passion plays, shrovetide plays and school comedies are non-existent; also it is doubtful whether English comedians appeared. From 1765 onwards concessions were given to travelling troupes of actors. From 1801 onwards the performances, which so far had taken place in wooden huts in public places, moved into the hall of the "Schützenhof". The summer season, when people took the waters, promised worthwhile profit to the various theatre companies which turned up regularly from 1804 onwards. In 1807, a ducal "Oberdirektion" (management) was established for the first time and supervised order both inside and outside the theatre, the punctual start of the performances and, last but not least, the wardrobe of the actors. This cavalier's office — theatre official, manager and stage manager in one person — was held by a Baron Malapert-Neufville with the aid of an assistant.

Karl Döbbelin's renowned troupe of twenty acting members settled in Wiesbaden in 1810 and opened the newly-built theatre hall in the "Schützenhof." Its programme consisted of plays and musical comedies, also smaller and larger operas. From 1810 to 1813 the theatre was under the management of Ungern-Sternberg and was named the "Nassau Ducal Court Theatre". Due to the war of 1813 it did not flourish very long. The name "German National Theatre" appeared for a short period (Mannheim is today the only one using the designation "National Theatre"), then the stage was left again to visiting troupes of actors. During the years 1814 (29th July to 12th September) and 1815 (May 27th to 11th August) Goethe was in Wiesbaden and attended performances there attracted particularly by the stage settings by the painter Friedrich Beuther.

At last, Wiesbaden got its own theatre; it was opened on 26th January 1827. In 1839, the constant change in the troupes of comedians stopped and Director Karl Beurer engaged Wiesbaden's first

permanent ensemble. The office of Ducal Manager was taken over by Karl von Bose.

Many famous performers — such as Schnorr von Carolsfeld, Adeline Patti, Bogumil Davison, the primadonna Frassini and others — appeared at that time before the public of Wiesbaden. From 1857 onwards, Duke Adolf conceded a yearly grant of 25.000 Gulden from the Nassau Ducal Treasury; more than double this amount was given by the casino. However, the annexation of Nassau by Prussia (1866) put an end to the ducal moneys and ducal managers and soon, the casino having been closed in 1871, the Prussian King Wilhelm I was forced to delve deeply into his own privy purse. 240.000 Goldmark every year meant a considerable sum. The Wiesbaden stage, now changed from a Ducal Court Theatre to a Royal Theatre, produced operas (Gluck, Meyerbeer, Mozart, Beethoven) and plays. On 7th October 1894, the friends of the theatre in Wiesbaden bade a melancholy farewell to the old theatre building and the thousand pictures in its foyer; the manager Georg von Huelsen had written an epilogue for the occasion. A few days later — on 16th October — the splendid new theatre, which exists still today, was formally opened in the presence of the Emperor. The Viennese architects Fellner and Hellmer had built it within the astonishingly short time of two years.

The management by Huelsen which, with the Emperor's assistance, launched the May Festivals, lasted for approximately a decade. It is considered to have reached heights of perfection and artistic excellence in technique, stage settings and historically accurate costumes.

For us theatregoers of today, a far more remarkable fact is that in 1895 for example, within one theatre-going year, 71 works were given 122 performances, i.e. the larger number were each performed once only. By contrast, at the present time the figures are between 8 and 20 works because of the very much increased

number of theatregoers for whom the various works have to be performed.

During the difficult transition years after the first world war, Ernst Legal, chief producer, enjoyed the devoted co-operation of all the artists, who were anxious about the prospects of existence of their theatre. Carl Hagemann was manager during the period of military occupation. The fire in the theatre in 1923 (after a "Rienzi" performance) would probably have ended in catastrophe had not a clever fire brigade chief directed all water jets on the iron curtain, which was already red hot, and thus confined the fire to the stage.

After the second world war and the Prussian province of Hessen-Nassau had become part of the Federal State of Hesse, Wiesbaden built a new "Kleine Haus" (small theatre) on the "Kurkollonaden" next to the splendid large theatre which had, luckily,

remained almost untouched by the effects of the war. In the "Kleine Haus" mainly plays are cultivated. In 1963 a studio stage was provided in the basement of the "Kleine Haus", where modern dramatic works are performed.

Thus the ensemble of the "Hessisches Staats-theater Wiesbaden" performs today on three stages. The ensemble with all its members, the orchestra and the technical staff amounts to 570 persons. The repertory includes operas, comic operas, operettas, ballets and plays. Approximately 50 different works are staged in approximately 700 performances on the three stages within one theatre-going year.

Each year since 1950 the "International May Festivals" take place. An important feature of these is the opportunity they afford to famous ensembles from the theatres of Eastern Europe to present themselves to Western European audiences.

Conductor — Ludwig Kaufmann



Natalie Hinsch-Grondahl



Claire Rainer



Liane Synek



Elisabeth Verlooy



Peter Bahrig



Reinhold Bartel



Hermin Esser

“Der fliegende Holländer”

(THE FLYING DUTCHMAN)

Romantic Opera in three acts by RICHARD WAGNER

Daland, a Norwegian Sea-Captain ... ALMAR HEGGEN

Senta, his daughter LIANE SYNEK

Erik, a hunter HERMIN ESSER

Mary, Senta's Nurse NATALIE HINSCH-GRONDAHL

Daland's Helmsman RICHARD GSELL/PETER BAHRIG

The Dutchman TOMISLAV NERALIC

Scene : The Norwegian coast.

Conductor :

LUDWIG KAUFMANN

Producer :

PETER KERTZ

Stage Sets :

THEO H. DORIG

Projections :

ANNELISE CORRODI

Chorus Master :

MARTIN BINGER

Repetiteur :

JOSEF ZOSEL

Stage Manager :

HELMUT GROSSER

Lighting Effects :

ALFRED RHODE

Wardrobe Supervisor :

HANS HOENSELAERS

Make-Up :

GUNTHER MERG

Assistant Stage Manager :

KLAUS HENNING

Prompter :

ANNIE MARKE

Story of the Opera on Page 8

To Mr. Gerald with my best
wishes - and many thanks.

Reinhold BarTEL

“Die Entführung aus dem Serail”

(IL SERAGLIO)

Comic Opera in three acts

Libretto after Bretzner — freely adapted by Stephanie the Younger

Music by WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Bassa Selim	...	...	...	...	HEINZ PETERS
Konstanze	...	...	...	...	ELISABETH VERLOOY
Blondchen	...	...	...	...	CLAIRE RAINER
Belmonte	...	...	...	...	REINHOLD BARTEL
Pedrillo	...	...	...	...	WOLFGANG FREY
Osmin	...	...	...	...	HELMUT IBLER

Conductor :
LUDWIG KAUFMANN

Stage Sets :
RUODI BARTH

Repetiteur :
JOSEF ZOSEL

Lighting Effects :
ALFRED RHODE

Make-Up :
GUNTHER MERG

Prompter :
ANNIE MARKE

Producer :
WOLFGANG BLUM

Chorus Master :
MARTIN BINGER

Stage Manager :
HELMUT GROSSER

Wardrobe Supervisor :
HANS HOENSELAERS

Assistant Stage Manager :
KLAUS HENNING

Story of the Opera on Page 10

Ottos "Der Fliegende Hollander"

(THE FLYING DUTCHMAN)

by RICHARD WAGNER

This Opera, the first of Wagner's well-known works, was first produced in Dresden in 1843, Wagner himself conducting. He also provided the libretto using the old legend, as re-told by Heine, of the Norse sea-captain who swore a great oath that, even if he were to sail forever, he would round the Cape of

Good Hope in the teeth of a furious gale. The Devil hearing the oath condemned the Dutchman to sail the stormy seas until Judgment Day unless redeemed by the love of a woman. To find such a woman he may come to land but once each seven years.

ACT I

The Overture is famous for its depiction of a great storm at sea. The curtain rises on a rocky coast in Norway where Daland, a Norse sea-captain, has run his vessel for safety. At the height of the storm the Dutchman's spectral ship drops anchor alongside

Daland's. Another seven years have passed and the Dutchman (Baritone) steps ashore to recount his story in his narrative "Die Frist ist um". Daland (Bass) joins him and consents, when the Dutchman offers him his treasure, to take him home where his (Daland's) daughter, Senta, may perhaps prove to be the Dutchman's redeeming angel.



Wolfgang Frey



Richard Gsell



Almar Heggen



Helmut Ibler



Tomislav Neralic



Heinz Peters

ACT II

In Daland's home Senta's friends are spinning (*Spinning Chorus*). Senta (Soprano), though rebuked by Mary her nurse (Mezzo-soprano), is idle. After gazing long in rapt concentration at his picture on the wall Senta sings the well-known Ballad — the tale of the legendary Dutchman whose picture and romantic story fascinate her. She proclaims herself ready to redeem him, horrifying her lover Eric (Tenor) who has come in to announce the return of Daland accompanied by a ghastly looking stranger. The Dutchman enters and is identified by Senta as the figure that has haunted her dreams. After a great duet Senta accepts his declaration of love much to the satisfaction of her father who has been beguiled by the stranger's gold.

ACT III

Shows Daland's and the Dutchman's ships anchored side by side — the one lit up, the other dark and silent with no response from her crew to the sailors' and girls' invitation to merry-making. A storm arises and the phantom crew appear and sing a strange chorus which frightens the others. Senta now comes, followed by Eric who pleads with her not to abandon him for the stranger. The Dutchman overhearing and believing himself betrayed by Senta rushes to his ship proclaiming who he really is and puts to sea. But Senta, breaking from Eric's grasp, flings herself into the sea calling to the Dutchman that she is faithful unto death. Together, she and the redeemed Dutchman, rise from the waters heavenwards in an apotheosis.

Dr. Dreser Claus Helmut	—	—	—	—	—	—	Intendant
Herr Böntgen Werner	—	—	—	—	—	—	Director
Herr Londzettel Erwin	—	—	—	—	—	—	Head Technical Manager

“Die Entfuhrung Aus Dem Serail”

(IL SERAGLIO)

by WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

ACT I

Konstanza, betrothed to Belmonte, a Spanish nobleman, has been abducted by pirates and sold as a slave to Pasha Selim together with her maid, Blondchen and Pedrillo, Belmonte's one-time servant, who are also lovers. Selim himself has fallen in love with Konstanza. Belmonte arrives before the palace to which he hopes to gain entry with Pedrillo's help but his way is barred by the sullen Osmin, the Pasha's major-domo. At last, however, he finds Pedrillo, with whom he plans escape from the Seraglio by sea.

Selim pays court to Konstanza but is rejected by her.

Pedrillo finally contrives Belmonte's admittance to the palace though Osmin endeavours to prevent it.

ACT II

Scene I : The villainous Osmin's advances to Blondchen are vigorously repulsed. Konstanza appears

to mourn her lost lover, Belmonte, but sorrow turns to joy as Pedrillo tells Blondchen that Belmonte is here and their rescue is at hand. Pedrillo puts Osmin out of action by making him drunk. The two pairs of lovers are united.

ACT III

Scene II : Night has come. As the signal for the escape Pedrillo sings a serenade. But just then Osmin awakes and enters. At once he alarms the guard and the would-be fugitives are captured. The lovers prepare for death but Selim Pasha, who recognises Belmonte as the son of his former enemy, reveals true magnanimity, returning good for evil and releasing the four lovers. They praise his generosity and leave for home and freedom.

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1964

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